Middle Level English Language Arts (ELA)

Grade 9

A Model Genre Unit

Indigenous and Norse Narratives

(Our Shared Narratives)

(Semester I)

**Unit Overview**

**Context(s):** Imaginative and Literary; Social, Cultural, and Historical

**Timeline:** Approximately six weeks

A unit focused on traditional and contemporary narratives (e.g., stories, folk tales, legends, and fables) provides many opportunities for students to understand the importance of oral language and its traditions. Such a unit can give students insights into the origins of their language(s), culture(s), and the universal storytelling traditions of many peoples. Using comparative stories from Norse (Icelandic, Scandinavian, and Germanic) and Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) North American traditions, this unit offers students the opportunity to understand how people have attempted to explain creation, the laws of nature, and their roles and responsibilities in the world.

The unit highlights the role that oral language plays as a vehicle for cultural transmission and those stories that are most relevant to Canadians. In this unit, students have opportunities to identify and appreciate the elements that are both common and unique to traditional Northern European and North American Indigenous cultures and understand the importance of oral traditions. Through their exploration of mythology and narrative with similar themes, students also have opportunities to recognize those elements that are common and the elements that are unique to the different societies as well as how these stories are relevant to their own lives.

Because Indigenous stories and traditions are an integral part of Canadian society and reflect the universal characteristics of many peoples, they provide important opportunities to deepen our understanding of who we are in a multicultural milieu. Because the origins of the English language are rooted in Old English and are closely entwined with the Norse, Icelandic, Scandinavian, British Isles, and Germanic peoples, the Norse narratives provide an important understanding of our linguistic and cultural beginnings.

The unit is organized around five focus questions with sample lessons and suggested resources included. (Time allocations given are approximations only. Teachers can choose to spend more or less time on each lesson depending on the needs and interests of their students.)

**Understanding:** The Indigenous and Norse narratives contain the beliefs and values of many peoples and are important foundational stories for Canadians.

**Possible Questions for Deeper Understanding**

* Why do people tell stories and tales (narratives, folk tales, legends, fables, proverbs)?
* How do these stories and tales help people understand their world?
* What lessons do we learn about people through these stories and tales?
* How are these stories and tales from around the world alike and different?
* Why is it important for each generation to hear and to retell these tales?
* Questions students would like to explore:

**English Language Arts Goals and Outcomes Overview [Grade 9]**

Comprehend and Respond (CR). Students will extend their abilities to view, listen to, read, comprehend, and respond to a range of contemporary and traditional grade-level-appropriate texts from First Nations, Métis and other cultures in a variety of forms (oral, print, and other texts) for a variety of purposes including for learning, interest, and enjoyment.

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| CR9.1a View, listen to, read, comprehend, and respond to a variety of texts that address identity (e.g., The Search for Self), social responsibility (e.g., Our Shared narratives), and efficacy (e.g., Doing the Right Thing). |
| **CR9.1b**View, listen to, read, comprehend, and respond to a variety of texts that address identity (e.g., Exploring Loyalty, Love, and Relationships), social responsibility (e.g., Equal Opportunity), and efficacy (e.g., Surviving and Conquering). |
| CR9.2a and CR9.2b Select and use the appropriate strategies to construct meaning before (e.g., formulating focus questions), during (e.g., adjusting rate to the specific purpose and difficulty of the text), and after (e.g., analyzing and evaluating) viewing, listening, and reading. |
| CR9.3a and CR9.3b Use pragmatic (e.g., language suitable for intended audience), textual (e.g., author’s thesis or argument, how author organized text to achieve unity, coherence, and effect), syntactic (e.g., parallel structures), semantic/lexical/morphological (e.g., connotation and denotation), graphophonic (e.g., common spellings and variants for effect or dialect), and other cues (e.g., fonts, colour) to construct and to confirm meaning. |
| CR9.4a View and demonstrate comprehension and evaluation of visual and multimedia texts including illustrations, maps, charts, graphs, pamphlets, photography, art works, video clips, and dramatizations to glean ideas suitable for identified audience and purpose. |
| **CR9.4b** View and demonstrate comprehension of visual and multimedia texts to synthesize and summarize ideas from multiple visual and multimedia sources. |
| CR9.5a Listen purposefully to understand, analyze, and evaluate oral information and ideas from a range of texts including conversations, discussions, interviews, and speeches. |
| CR9.5b Listen purposefully to understand, analyze, and evaluate oral information and ideas from a range of texts including directions and speeches, recognizing train of thought, main points, and presentation techniques |
| CR9.6a and CR9.6b Read and demonstrate comprehension and interpretation of grade-level-appropriate texts including traditional and contemporary prose fiction, poetry, and plays from First Nations, Métis, and other cultures to develop an insightful interpretation and response. |
| CR9.7a and CR9.7b Read independently and demonstrate comprehension of a variety of information texts including expository essays, historical accounts, news articles, and scientific writing. |
| CR9.8a and CR9.8b Read grade 9 appropriate texts to increase fluency and expression (150+wcpm orally; 215-260 wpm silently). |

**Compose and Create (CC). Students will extend their abilities to speak, write, and use other forms of representation to explore and present thoughts, feelings, and experiences in a variety of forms for a variety of purposes and audiences.**

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| **CC9.1a** Create various visual, multimedia, oral, and written texts that explore identity (e.g., The Search for Self), social responsibility (e.g.,Our Shared Narratives), and efficacy (e.g., Doing the Right Thing). |
| **CC9.1b**Create various visual, multimedia, oral, and written texts that explore identity (e.g., Exploring Loyalty, Love, and Relationships), social responsibility (e.g., Equal Opportunity), and efficacy (e.g., Surviving and Conquering). |
| CC9.2a and CC9.2b Create and present an individual researched inquiry project related to a topic, theme, or issue studied in English language arts. |
| CC9.3.a and CC9.3b Select and use the appropriate strategies to communicate meaning before (e.g., considering and valuing own observations, experiences, ideas, and opinions as sources for ideas), during (e.g., shaping and reshaping drafts with audience and purpose in mind), and after (e.g., ensuring that all parts support the main idea or thesis) speaking, writing, and other representing activities. |
| CC9.4a and CC9.4b Use pragmatic (e.g., inclusive language that supports people across cultures, genders, ages, and abilities), textual (e.g., strong leads, coherent body, and effective endings), syntactic (e.g., subordination to show more precisely the relationships between ideas), semantic/lexical/ morphological (e.g., both the denotative and connotative meaning of words), graphophonic (e.g., knowledge of spelling patterns and rules to identify analyze, and correct spelling errors), and other cues (e.g., combine print and visuals to enhance presentations) to construct and to communicate meaning. |
| CC9.5a Create and present a variety of visual and multimedia presentations to best represent message for an intended audience and purpose. |
| **CC9.5b**Create and present a variety of visual and multimedia presentations including addressing various audiences for one proposal |
| CC9.6a and CC9.6b Use oral language to interact purposeful, confidently, and appropriately in a variety of situations including participating in one-to-one, small group, and large group discussions (e.g., prompting and supporting others, solving problems, resolving conflicts, building consensus, articulating and explaining personal viewpoint, discussing preferences, speaking to extend current understanding, celebrating special events and accomplishments). |
| **CC9.7a and CC9.7b** Use oral language to intentionally to express a range of information and ideas in formal and informal situations including dramatic readings of poems, monologues, scenes from plays, and stories and presenting reasoned arguments of opposing viewpoints. |
| CC9.8a Write to describe (a profile of a character), to narrate (a narrative essay), to explain and inform (a researched report), and to persuade (a review). |
| **CC9.8b**Write to describe (a description of a scene), to narrate (a personal essay), to explain and inform (a multi-paragraph letter), and to persuade (a letter to the editor) |
| CC9.9a and CC9.9b Experiment with a variety of text forms (e.g., debates, meetings, presentations to unfamiliar audiences, poetry, précis, short script, advice column, video documentary, comic strip) and techniques (e.g., tone, persona, point of view, imagery, dialogue, figurative language). |

Assess and Reflect on Language Abilities (AR). Students will extend their abilities to assess and reflect on their own language skills, discuss the skills of effective viewers, representers, listeners, speakers, readers, and writers, and set goals for future improvement.

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| AR9.1a and AR9.1b Assess personal strengths and needs as a viewer, listener, reader, representer, speaker, and writer and contributions to the community of learners and develop goals based on assessment, and work toward them. |
| AR9.2a and AR9.2b Assess own and others’ work for clarity, correctness, and impact. |

Suggested Resources for the Unit

A range of language, prose (fiction and non-fiction), poetry, and plays (scripts), as well as human, video, and other resources are suggested.

Language Resources

*ResourceLines 9/10*

*Dictionary*

Poetry

“Direction,” by Alonzo Lopez from *The Whispering Wind* by Terry Allen. Institute of American Indian Arts (Bantam, Doubleday, Dell Publishing), 1972. (also in *Tales from Here and There*)

Plays/Scripts

Prose

**Shorter Prose**

“The Gift of Stories, The Gift of Breath” by Joseph Bruchac (*Crossroads 9*)

“The Storytelling Stone”, *Return of the Sun* by Joseph Bruchac, Freedom, CA: The Crossing Press, 1989

“Tlingit National Anthem” retold by Robert Willard (*SightLines 9*)

“How Rocks Were Born” translated by Lawrence Millman (*SightLines 9*)

“Irraweka, Mischief-maker” retold by Philip Sherlock (*SightLines 9*)

*Voices Under One Sky* by Trish Fox Roman, Ed. (Nelson)

*Beowulf* retold by Kevin Crossley-Holland and illustrated by Charles Keeping, Toronto, ON: Oxford University Press, 1999

*Tales of the Norse Gods* retold by Barbara Leonard Picard, Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2001

*The Children of Odin* retold by Padraic Colum, New York: Aladdin Books, 2004

**Older but Still Useful Resources**

“The Loup-Garou” retold by Mary Alice Downie (*Crossroads 1*)

*Favourite Norse Myths* retold by Mary Pope Osborne and illustrated by Troy Howell, New York: Scholastic, 1996

*Norse Myths* retold by Kevin Crossley-Holland and illustrated by Gillian McClure, Hemel Hempstead, Herts: Macdonald Young Books, 1995

*The Doom of the Gods* retoldby Michael Harrison and illustrated by Tudor Humphries, Toronto, ON: Oxford, 1985

*Myths of the Norseman* retold by Roger Lancelyn Green, London, UK: Puffin Books, 1970

*The Great Deeds of Superheroes* retold by Maurice Saxby and illustrated by Robert Ingpen, Newtown, NSW: Millennium Books, 1989

*Usborne Illustrated Guide to Norse Myths and Legends* by Cheryl Evans and Anne Millard, designed and illustrated by Rodney Matthews, London, UK: Usborne Publishing, 1986

*Adventures with the Giants, Adventures with the Gods, Adventures with the Heroes* byC. F. Sellew, Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1950, 1945, 1954

References

The following titles are referenced in the unit. Teachers who wish to learn more about Indigenous narrative will find them useful professional resources.

Alverman, D. (1995). *Tales from here and there*. Toronto, ON: D. C. Heath.

Cajete, G. (2000)*. Native science: Natural laws of interdependence*. Santa Fe, NM: Clear Light Publishers.

Cole, J. (1983). *Best-loved folktales of the world.* New York: Anchor Books.

Coutu, P. R., & Hoffman-Mercredi, L. (1999). *Inkonze: The stones of traditional knowledge*. Edmonton, AB: Thunderwoman Ethnographics.

Evans, O. & Millard, A. (1986). *Norse myths and legends*. London: Ushorne Publishing.

Harrison, M. & Humphries, T. (1985). *The doom of the gods*. London: Oxford University Press.

Petrone,P*.* (1990). *Tradition to the present*. Toronto, ON: Oxford University Press.

Saskatchewan Indian Federated College. (n.d.)*. Oral traditions,* *education: 1*. Regina, SK: Author.

Young, T. A., Bruchac, J., Livingston, N., & Kurkjian, C. (2004). “Folk literature: Preserving the storytellers’ magic”. *The Reading Teacher*, *57*(8), 782-792.

Young, T. A. (Ed.). (2004). *Happily ever after: Sharing folk literature with elementary and middle school students*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Zimmerman, L. J. (2003). *American Indians: The first nations*. London, UK: Duncan Baird.

Zona, G. A. (1994). *The soul would have no rainbow if the eyes had no tears and other Native American proverbs.* New York: Touchstone (Simon & Schuster).

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| **Outcomes** | Learning Activities | Assessment andEvaluation |
| CR 9.1a  CC 9.2a  CR 9.1a  CR 9.6a  CR 9.6a  CR 9.1a  CC 9.6a  CR 9.6a  CR 9.3a  CR 9.7a  CC 9.6a  CC 9.8a  CR 9.1a  CR 9.1a  CR 9.6a  CR 9.2a  CR 9.2a  CR 9.3a  CR 9.7a  CC 9.5a  CR 9.1a  CC 9.2a  CR9.5a  CR 9.2a  CR 9.2a  CR 9.3a  CR 9.5a  CR 9.2a  CR 9.3a  CR 9.5a  CR 9.1a  CR 9.5a  CR 9.2a  CR 9.2a CR9.3a  CC 9.8a  CR 9.2a  CR 9.5a  CR 9.6a  CR 9.2a  CR 9.2a  CR 9.3a  CR 9.2a  CC 9.6a  CC 9.3a  CC 9.4a  CC 9.6a  CR 9.1a  CR 9.5a  CR 9.2a  CR 9.2a  CR 9.3a  CR 9.2a  CR 9.3a  CC 9.5a  CC 9.9a  CC 9.3a  CC 9.4a  CR 9.3a  CR 9.3a  CR 9.1a  CR9.6a  CR 9.2a  CR 9.2a  CR 9.3a  CR9.3a  CR 9.6a  CR 9.2a  CC 9.7a  CR 9.1a  CC 9.2a  CR 9.6a  CR 9.2a  CR 9.2a  CR 9.3a  CR 9.2a  CR 9.6a  CR 9.3a  CC 9.8a  CC 9.3a  CR 9.2a  CR 9.1a  CR 9.6a  CR9.2a  CR 9.2a  CR 9.3a  CR 9.2a  CC 9.8a  CC 9.2a  CR 9.1a  CR 9.5a  CR 9.6a  CC 9.5a  CR 9.3a  CR 9.1a  CR 9.1a  CR 9.6a  CR 9.5a  CR 9.2a  CR 9.3a  CC 9.8a  CC 9.3a  CC 9.4a  CC 9.8a  CC 9.3a  CC 9.4a  CC 9.3a  CR 9.1a  CR 9.6a  CR 9.2a  CR 9.3a  CR 9.6a  CR 9.4a  CC 9.8a  CC 9.3a  CR 9.4a  CR 9.4a  CR 9.2a  CR 9.3a  CC 9.6a  CR 9.6a  CR 9.2a  CR 9.3a  CC 9.8a  CC 9.3a  CC9.4a  CC 9.5a  CC 9.3a  CC 9.4a  CR 9.1a  CC 9.6a  CC 9.3a  CC 9.4a  AR 9.1a  CC 9.6a  CC 9.3a  CC9.4a  CC 9.8a  CC 9.3a  CC 9.4a  CC 9.5a  CC 9.3a  CC 9.4a | Indigenous and Norse Narratives  Storytelling is a timeless art practised through the centuries. Stories or narratives teach us about the past (our ancestors), help explain the present (the mysteries of nature and of human beings), and help us look to the future.  All cultures have stories. The oral storytelling tradition is universal. These stories contain those beliefs and values that are considered important by each individual culture. They reflect a people’s world view. The effective storyteller is a respected member of the community. Storytellers and their stories transmit and reveal cultural knowledge and cultural heritage.  **Stories of Your Time and Their Origins**  Sample Lessons 1 to 2  **Focus Question 1: Why do people tell stories and tales (folk tales, legends, fables, and even proverbs)?**  “Knowledge speaks. Wisdom listens.”  Old stories are forever new. The people who first heard the traditional stories “listened to those tales because they loved them and told them to their children without realizing they were participating in the perpetuation of folk tradition. Listening. That is where it begins. As a child, I sat next to the potbellied stove in my grandparents’ general store listening to Adirondack tall tales, songs, and stories about logging” (Bruchac, in Young, Bruchac, Livingston, & Kurkjian, 2004, p. 783).  Storytelling is a way people pass knowledge from one generation to another. Usually the first stories that we learn are from the world’s folk tales. These stories usually entertain us but also “transmit the values and wisdom of the culture, imbue a strong sense of right and wrong, and provide a reservoir of vivid images that become part of the individual’s imagination and even everyday language” (Cole, 1983, p. xvi).  Invite students to do as storytellers such as Joseph Bruchac have done: Listen, Observe, Remember, and Share the history, culture, and philosophy that are expressed by traditional tales.  **Some Narratives That You Remember and Their Roots**  Lesson 1 – 60 minutes  **Suggested Resources:** (See Cole’s *Best-Loved Folktales of the World*)  a) “Le Loup-garou/Roo Garroo” (Canada), “Wishketchahk”/“Wesakechak” (Canada), “Raven” (Canada), “Cinderella”, “Beauty and the Beast”, “Puss in Boots” (France)  b) “Snow-White”, “Sleeping Beauty”, “Rumpelstiltskin”, “Rapunzel”, “Little Red Riding Hood”, “Hansel and Gretel” (Germany), “Jack and the Beanstalk”, “The Pied Piper” (England), “The Three Billygoats Gruff” (Norway)  Before Speaking   * The first narratives or stories we usually hear as children have their roots in a long oral tradition. Ask students to consider, for example, the stories listed above. How many of them are students familiar with and what do they know about the roots or origins of these stories?   During Speaking   * Have the students choose one familiar folk tale and tell a part of it that was memorable for them. Encourage students to emphasize the story line or language that makes it memorable (e.g., “I’ll huff and I’ll puff, and I’ll …” or “What big eyes you have, Grandmother!”). * What lessons do these stories teach? How effective are they? Why do we remember them for a lifetime? * Are there folk tales that the students did not hear or know about as children? For example, how many have heard or read the following:   “The White Cat” (France), “Thousand-Furs” (Germany), “The Thoughtless Abbot” (Italy), “I Ate the Loaf” (Spain), “The Seal’s Skin” (Iceland), “The Story of King Frost” (Russia), “Intelligence of Luck” (Czechoslovakia), “The Donkey Driver and the Thief” (Arabia), “The Three Hares” (Turkey), “The Sparrow with the Slit Tongue” (Japan), “The Bunyip” (Australia), “How Spider Obtained the Sky-God’s Stories” (Ashanti, Africa), “The Magic Tree” (Haiti), “Three Magic Oranges” (Costa Rica), “The Lost Woman” (North America T’suu Tina)? Unfortunately, many of the world’s tales are not as widely known as others.   * Have students form groups of four and then draw a family tree with the members of the group listed one below each other. Each box can represent a generation and the person whose name is at the top of the tree can write a brief story of no more than five or six sentences on a sheet of paper. The writer then whispers the story to the person who represents the next generation. Have students take turns “handing down” this story in a whisper to only one person at a time. The person who represents the most recent generation is last. Compare the first version of the story with the most recent version of the story. What features of the original survived (based on *Tales from Here and There*)? What does this tell us about the strengths and limitations of an oral tradition?   After Speaking   * Have students consider how many other stories they know. What are the family stories and community stories that they have heard over and over? Who usually tells these stories best? Why is their telling best? Why do these stories continue to be retold and retold? Why are they memorable and important to the students as individuals and as members of a society?   **Reading About the Source and Role of Stories**  Lesson 2 – 60 minutes  **Suggested Resources:** “The Gift of Stories, The Gift of Breath” (Bruchac), “The Storytelling Stone” (Bruchac), or a similar story about the source of stories and the role of the storyteller  Before Reading   * Ask students to consider “where stories come from” and “what it would be like if people had no stories to tell”. * Have students complete the following sentence stem: Stories are … * Before reading the entire text, ask students to consider the opening sentence. How does the author use this sentence to capture our attention and initial the story? Why is this effective?   During Reading   * Like all good storytellers, Bruchac uses the elements of effective stories including a time and place, characters and dialogue, problem or interesting event to initiate the story, and then a series of events that hold our interest until we can figure out the resolution or answer to the problem presented to the characters. * Have the students create a graphic organizer to note the key elements and how they are used in this story. Ensure students understand the chain of events that good storytellers use.   After Reading   * Have students reread the story and jot notes about the images that come to mind as they read. * If they could capture the essence of the story in an illustration (sketch, painting, photograph) what would it be? What would be the “strongest” image in their mind? * Have students sketch their image, share, and explain to a classmate why they think it is suitable.   **Voices Through Time**  Sample Lessons 3 through 6  Some of the greatest and most wonderful stories ever told are very old but were never written down. One storyteller learned the story from another and, in this way, it was kept alive for hundreds of years. These stories have been handed down orally from generation to generation and reflect the cultural heritage and the cultural way of life of the people.  **Focus Question 2: How do these stories and tales help people understand their world?**  **Indigenous Narratives**  Lesson 3 – 120 minutes  Before Listening   * Have students consider the following quotation: “Old tales last because they teach so much – without hitting you over the head that you’re learning something worthwhile. In American Indian cultures, traditional tales are used instead of physical punishment to correct the behaviour of children. Stories as lessons stay longer and sink deeper” (Bruchac in Young, Bruchac, Livingston, and Kurkjian, 2004, p. 783). * What is Bruchac saying? How could this be said in another way? How would you explain it?   During Listening   * Model a notemaking strategy. Highlight how to make notes when listening (versus reading or viewing). * Discuss strategies that students can use to keep up with what others are saying. * Explain how to keep the big picture (main idea) in mind, listen for important ideas and key details, and capture the key words or phrases that will remind students of each point when they review their notes and revise them. * Remind students that it is impossible to get down every word, but that it is not impossible to capture the key words. * Have students listen to the following statements and make jot notes of the key ideas and important supporting details. * Canada’s Indigenous peoples have created “a vast and remarkably diversified body of oral narratives” (Petrone, 1990, p. 10). Their stories explain how the world came to be, the existence of people and animals, and the mysteries of nature. The explanations are diverse. Each Indigenous group has its own particular set of accords with its own values and customs, embodying its own philosophical and religious beliefs. * Traditionally, European narratives have been categorized as myths, legends, folk tales, and fables and they have been classified as fiction. Indigenous “oral narratives defy simple categorization and European classifications are inadequate. In the absence of suitable terminology, the terms ‘traditional narrative’ or ‘oral narrative’ or ‘story’ [is] used … instead of ‘myth’ or ‘legend’” (Petrone, 1990, pp. 10-13). These stories represent the way in which particular Indigenous cultures understand and think about the world. They embody the totality of each Indigenous group’s beliefs, values, ideas, and spirituality. * “Indigenous stories and mythologies, [therefore,] do not readily fit European labels and are not considered by First Nation’s peoples as untrue. The diversified body of Indigenous oral narratives has a great number of sacred stories that contain the spiritual beliefs, traditions, laws, morals, and history of the culture-group transmitted by the elders of the tribe in order to explain the mysteries of the universe” (Petrone, 1990, pp. 10-13). Other narratives were more ordinary stories told for entertainment or instruction. The Indigenous stories in this unit should be respected for both their sacred and secular nature. The narratives explored in this unit include an explanation of how the world was created, Indigenous hero tales or legends, vision quest stories, and just good stories. * Certain sacred stories are told by gifted and respected storytellers and are handed down orally from generation to generation. These narratives include specific elements along with protocol. Traditionally, the narratives were told during the winter months. These stories have had and continue to have: * a specialized story script or framework * a specialized telling style and effective figurative language * elements of the natural environment through which respect for nature and a sense of humanity could be taught * a moral lesson that applies to everyday living.   Note: The storyteller may use various techniques to maintain audience interest. Because these stories are told by specialized storytellers, teachers are encouraged to invite Indigenous storytellers to class and to follow protocol.  After Listening   * After students have listened a second time to the statements presented above, distribute a printed copy of the text and ask students to highlight or underline the key ideas and important supporting details and then to compare them with the notes they made when listening. Which set of notes is more accurate? Why? What is their strength – oral or written? What do students need to do to improve their listening, reading, and notemaking strategies?   **An Explanation of How an Indigenous World Was Created**  The Indigenous people of North America view the world as a place of sacred mystery.  “The native relationship with the world is rooted in a profound respect for the land, its features, and its life-forms. Mother Earth and Father Sky provide, but they also challenge. Humans are not above creation, but part of it, and people must forge a respectful, balanced relationship with the world around them” (Zimmerman, 2003, p. 9).  “The Earth is my mother and on her bosom I will repose” (Chief Techumseh, 1810).  “Mother Earth takes many forms. Everything within the landscape reminds the people of her” (Zimmerman, 2003, p. 9).  “Listen to the voice of nature, for it holds treasure for you” (Huron Proverb).  “Native North Americans believe that the creator endowed all things, living and non-living, with spirit. In sharing this attribute, everything animate and inanimate is related and sacred; people are therefore expected to respect all things on Mother Earth …” (Zimmerman, 2003, p. 61).  Some Explanations: A Cree explanation such as Wesakechak in “We All Have Gifts from our Creator” (Doug Cuthand, *Leader Post*, March 1, 2003), a Dene explanation (perhaps “Earth’s Creation” retold by Alexander Mackenzie in *Inkonze*), or a Saulteaux explanation)  Before Listening   * Storytellers know how to capture their listeners’, readers’, or viewers’ attention and spark their imagination. Besides knowing their story well before it is told, they use variety in their voice, they use hand and body movements to emphasize certain words or ideas, and they make the elements of their story (including time, place, characters, and events – beginning, middle, and end) come to life. * Prepare and give the students a listening guide that asks them to consider these elements as they listen to the retelling of one of these texts by the teacher or an elder or to an audio recording of the text.   During Listening   * As students listen, have them jot notes using a graphic organizer that includes the title of the text, setting (when, where), characters (who), and key events (in the beginning, middle, and end).   After Listening   * Have students consider possible reasons for the story being told and what the story helps the listeners understand about life or their world (i.e., what it explains or teaches). How is this message relevant today? * Have students listen or listen and watch as the story is retold. What was the storyteller’s secret recipe for success? * Have the students consider how the storyteller used language (including words and phrases and sentence structure), voice, inflection, and emphasis to tell the story. Why were these effective? * How might this story be presented if it were set in a contemporary Saskatchewan city?   **Fact or Fiction; Fact and Fiction**  Lesson 4 – 60 minutes  **Suggested Resources:** “Tlingit National Anthem” (*SightLines 9*) or a similar traditional narrative explaining an important historical event  Before Reading   * This narrative tells of the migration of the Tlingit people from the interior of the Yukon and British Columbia to the Pacific Coast. It was usually presented at a potlatch, a traditional gift-giving ceremony, and contains important historical information for these people.   During Reading   * As students read the narrative, have them identify and make notes on the cause of the migration, the choice of women explorers, and the cause of the Tlingit people’s grief.   After Reading   * Traditional narratives often supply important historical facts. What “facts” were presented? What natural danger did the Tlingit overcome? What did the people sacrifice in order to create their nation? Why is this narrative titled “Tlingit National Anthem”? Why is this story considered a “sacred” narrative?   **Writing and Speaking**   * We all have stories to tell. Consider the following prompt: You have 143 grand-children. Tell a story about the way you grew up in your family or a special experience that you have had that you think the grandchildren should know, hear, or read. * Plan the four key ideas or events that you wish the younger generation to know. Develop a strong topic and concluding sentence. Use transition words to help develop coherence. Edit and proofread; then find a partner and read your final draft aloud. * Speak clearly and at a rate and volume that your listener can easily understand. * After practising, record your paragraph.   **Tricksters**  Lesson 5 – 120 minutes  In many societies, a common element is a character utilized as a vehicle to teach or illustrate values, beliefs, and ideas considered important to a culture. This character is used to show what happens when we are bad (e.g., greedy) and gives us a chance to see the consequences. In some societies, this character is referred to as the "trickster". Indigenous narratives share many of the characteristics of tricksters in other cultures (e.g., Loki in the Norse oral tradition).  Tricksters frequently share the characteristics of both human and spirit entities and generally have a great curiosity that often leads to trouble. The character can be honest or deceptive, kind or cruel, charming or mischievous, all qualities possessed by human beings. In addition, tricksters may assume supernatural powers in order to teach a valuable lesson. The trickster is a clever and ideal mechanism within the oral tradition for illustrating a moral lesson and passing on important values.  **Interesting (and Tricky) Individuals**  **Suggested Resources:** Listen to two or three trickster stories from Western Canada (e.g., “Wesakachak and the Geese retold by Jackson Beardy in *Voices Under One Sky*, “How Rocks Were Born” by L. Millman in *SightLines 9* , “Irraweka, Mischief-maker” retold by Philip Sherlock in *SightLines 9* )  Before Listening   * Through stories with and about tricksters, we can learn both about the virtues and transgressions of characters whether they are Nanabush, Wesakachak, Raven, Glooskap, or Coyote. We often learn not to do what the trickster has done.   During Listening     * As students listen to these narratives, ask them to make a list of the virtues and the transgressions of each trickster. What qualities does each trickster reveal in the narrative?   After Listening   * Have students consider the elements that the narrative used to make the story effective. * Have students use the following chart to summarize their insights.  |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Title of Narrative:** |  | | Trickster |  | | Key Events |  | | Point of View (first person, third person) |  | | Qualities (virtues and transgressions) |  | | Moral or Lesson |  |  * Ask students to choose the trickster who appealed most to them and write a pattern poem about him. Have students organize their poem in five lines that create a clear, unified impression of their subject.   **Title** (Name of Trickster)  A Key Quality (Noun) (e.g., Captain Spell Well)  Two Describing Words (Adjective, Adjective) (e.g., loquacious, reliable)  Three Action Words (Verb, Verb, Verb) (e.g., proofread, confirm, correct)  Three Qualifiers of the Actions (Adverb, Adverb, Adverb) (e.g., speedily, carefully, accurately)  A Four Word Conclusion (Adjective, Noun, Adjective, Noun) (superhero protector of language)  **Language Study: Understanding Unknown Words From the Narratives**   * Often in listening, reading, and viewing, students encounter unknown words (e.g., loquacious). Whenever they encounter unfamiliar words in a text, they can use clues and a strategy to help determine their meaning. One useful strategy is CSSD: * **c**ontext (clues from the words or illustrations near the unfamiliar word) * **s**tructure (clues from the word parts – their prefixes, roots, and suffixes) * **s**ound (clues from saying the word out loud and connecting it to another time) * **d**ictionary (information that you get from looking up the unfamiliar word and determining how it is used and then what it means). * Have students review one text that they have listened to or read in this unit. Identify five words that were or still are unfamiliar to them. Model how they could use CSSD to figure out the meanings. Challenge students to make the words their own (i.e., use a “keep it” strategy).   **Animals**  Lesson 6 – 120 minutes  Indigenous people have a tradition of respect for animals. Because of this respect, stories of animals are often found in their narratives.  **Reading Poetry to Learn**  Activity 1  **Suggested Resources:** Read a poem such as “Direction” (Alonzo Lopez) or “I Go Forth to Move About the Earth” (both from *The Whispering Wind*) or a similar poem that deals with the role of earth, sky, and the directions in Indigenous life and values  Before Reading   * “The characteristic powers of particular animals can be of benefit to people” (Zimmerman, 2003, p. 67). “Many origin stories describe animals as being as old as the Earth itself; these animals then helped to create people and teach them to live on the Earth …” (Zimmerman, 2003, p. 66). * Before students read the poem, ask them to consider the elements of earth, sky, wind, and the directions in their contemporary lives. What have students been   taught about the role of these elements in life and nature and how do they think about them?  During Reading   * Who are the important animals? What do they represent?   After Reading   * What is the importance of each trait to humans?   “The relationships between peoples, animals, plants and the land are carefully explained in an extensive lore, and the … ceremonies that form a core part of native life underline the links between the world people inhabit and the realm of the spirits” (Zimmerman, 2003, p. 61).  **Reading Narratives to Learn**  Activity 2   * Have students consider two or three Indigenous narratives to explore the values and morals of three different animal characters. * Consider, for example, “Grandfather Bear” told by Earth Elder (Saulteaux), *Voices Under One Sky*; “The Last Word” told by Joseph Bruchac (Abenaki), *Voices Under One Sky;* or“Muskox and Conversation” (Dene), “The Bear Stole the Sun” (Dene), “The Crow and Vanity” (Dene), “Beynat and Frogs and Ecology” (Dene) in *Inkonze*. * Ask students to consider and to respond individually to the following prompts using a dialogue journal: * What did the people respect in each animal? * What specific symbolic significance was communicated? * What did each narrative teach about the interconnectedness of all things and the role of balance in life?   **Indigenous Cultural Heroes and Legends**  Sample Lessons 7 and 8  Another type of Indigenous story that is very prominent in Indigenous communities is the legend. “Indigenous stories about cultural heroes provide an explanation of how the world works and are important because they contain lessons about proper behaviour and respect. Heroes come in many forms and include the often extraordinary activities of otherwise normal people” (Zimmerman, 2003, p. 75).  Like other narratives, legends are also stories that are told to entertain and to instruct.  **Focus Question 3: What lessons do we learn about people through these stories and tales?**  **Important (and Interesting) Traditional Heroes, Monsters, and Legends**  Lesson 7 – 120 minutes  **Suggested Resources:** Have students consider two or more of the following legends:   * “The Legend of Otchope (the Arctic Giant)” (from *In the Footsteps of Glaciers*); “Copper Woman” or “Two Giants” (Dene) (from *Inkonze*) * “Running Eagle – Woman Warrior of the Blackfeet” (Beverly Hungry Wolf in *Voices Under One Sky*) or *Old Wives’ Lake* (J. D. Fry) * “Roo Garoo” or “Rou Garous” (a Métis trickster), which could be contrasted with French Canadian “Loup Garou” (perhaps M. A. Downie’s version in *Crossroads 1*) * “The Spirit of Windigo” (Ojibwa) (monster) [“Monsters are genuinely evil and seek to wreak disruption, harm, and death wherever they go” (Zimmerman, 2003, p. 76)].   Before Reading   * Have students consider if heroes and monsters exist in their daily lives or world. Do they know any real-life heroes or monsters from their personal experience or from the worlds of sport, history, medicine, science, or politics? Why are they heroes or monsters? What does it take to be a hero or monster?   During Reading   * As students read each legend, have them note what lessons they are learning from the narrative.   After Reading     * Indigenous narratives feature different kinds of heroes and monsters. What are their traits? (Consider words such as brave, caring, controlling, corrupt, cruel, cunning, demanding, determined, greedy, harmful, helpful, intelligent, kind, powerful, pure, resourceful, selfish, self-sacrificing, strong, wise.) * Sort the descriptive words into three categories – hero, monster, or both. * Why do we identify with heroes and monsters? What do we learn from them?   **Language Study: Indigenous Proverbs**   * “Proverbs are time-honoured truths which condense the collected wisdom and experience of a people and their culture. If you want to know a people, the saying goes, know their proverbs” (Zona, 1994). * What do the following proverbs tell us? * Which proverbs “speak” most “loudly” to you as an individual? Why? * Have students choose one proverb and explain in a paragraph what significance this proverb has for them. * Show students how to use an anecdote or personal experience to support their explanation. * “With all things and in all things, we are relatives.” (Sioux) * “Life is both giving and receiving.” (Mohawk) * “Give me knowledge, so I may have kindness for all.” (Plains) * “It is less of a problem to be poor than to be dishonest.” (Anishinabe) * “We will be known forever by the tracks we leave.” (Dakota) * “Never sit while your seniors stand.” (Cree) * “The more you give, the more good things come to you.” (Crow) * “Let your nature be known and proclaimed.” (Huron) * “Everything the Power does, it does in a circle.” (Lakota) * “When an elder speaks, be silent and listen.” (Mohawk) * “Guard your tongue in youth, and in age you may mature a thought that will be of service to your people.” (Sioux) * “Most of us do not look as handsome to others as we do to ourselves.” (Assiniboine) * “Only two relationships are possible – to be a friend or to be an enemy.” (Cree) * “Deeds speak louder than words.” (Assiniboine) * “Friendship cannot be bought; you have to help make it.” (Sauk)   **Another Type of Narrative: Vision Quest Stories**  Lesson 8 – 60 minutes  “It is good to be reminded that each of us has a different dream” (Crow proverb). Vision quest stories emerge from a personal spiritual journey involving special powers and natural gifts.  “To go on a vision quest is to go into the presence of the great mystery” (Lakota proverb).  **Suggested Resources:** Consider “A Mountain Legend” (Jordan Wheeler, *Voices Under One Sky*) or a similar story about a vision quest.  Before Reading   * A vision quest is a sacred ceremony in which an individual goes to a secluded place to fast and meditate. It is usually done by an adolescent boy and it is hoped that the quest will give one a glimpse of the future and the direction that one needs to take in one’s personal journey through life. * What makes a vision quest appealing and important to teenagers?   During Reading   * Why is Jason anxious to prove himself? Why are all young people anxious to prove themselves?   After Reading     * Have students prepare responses to the following prompts in a dialogue journal. * What did Jason learn? * What role did the eagle (a bird/animal) play in this quest? What does the eagle symbolize? * Why might North American Indigenous cultures place high value on vision quests?   **Focus Question 4: How are these stories and tales from around the world alike and different?**  **Some of the Earliest European Stories – Norse Narratives**  Sample Lessons 9 through 12  The Norse (or Norsemen) were the Germanic people of what is now Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. They sailed the seas to trade and raid. They were called Northmen (or Norse) for their land of origin (in the North) and also Vikings (meaning “pirates”) for the terror that they were repudiated to spread. They were believed to have crossed the North Atlantic and to have settled Iceland about 93 AD, Greenland about 982, and visited North America about 15 years later. Leif Ericsson is thought to have put ashore at Helluland (a mountainous area, likely Baffin Island), Markland (likely Labrador), and Vinland (possibly Newfoundland). Evidence of the Norse having visited and lived in Newfoundland is found at L’Anse aux Meadows. They traded and fought with the local people (likely Inuit) and are given the credit for European discovery of America and for the first European colony on Canadian soil.  Norse narratives are “stories concerning the gods of the Norsemen and formed part of their religion. The narratives illustrate the behaviour that was admired or condemned by the gods” (Evans & Millard, 1986). Norse narratives were told to explain how the world came to be, the existence of people and animals, and the mysteries of nature. The explanation usually involved gods or godlike beings.  Have students prepare a comparison chart or Venn diagram to compare the similar and different features of Indigenous and Norse narratives. After each of the following Norse narratives, have students add to their chart.  **In the Beginning … An Explanation (Scaldic Poems in the *Eddas*)**  The Norse, like others, wondered about the beginning of the world and how people came to be. They told stories to explain the mysteries of the universe. The Norse used “scalds”, or poet storytellers, to transmit their stories orally in the form of poetry. This poetry described the creation of the world, the relation of the gods to humans, the downfall of the gods, and the new heaven and new earth.  **Listening to An Explanation of How the Norse World Was Created**  Lesson 9 – 60 minutes  **Suggested Resources:** “The Beginning of All Things” (retold by Barbara Picard in *Tales of the Norse Gods*) or other retellings such as “The Creation” (Kevin Crossley-Holland), “Creation: The Nine Worlds” (Mary Pope Osborne), “The Beginning of a World” (retold by Catharine F. Sellew), or “The Creation” (by Olivia E. Coolidge)   * As students listen to and read one of the explanations, have them create a visual of the Norse cosmology. * Highlight that the Norse thought of the universe as a fairly flat plain surrounded by mist and darkness. Below was the region of Niflheim, a world of cold, mist, and ice. * The world of the Norse gods was arranged on three levels and made up of nine areas, or worlds, supported by a huge ash tree or World-Tree (Yggdrasil).   Level One: Asgard (land of the gods where Odin rules)  Vanaheim (home of gods and goddesses)  Alfheim (home of the light elves)  Level Two: Midgard (home of humans)  Jothunheim (home of the giants)  Svartalheim (home of the dark elves)  Nidavellir (home of the dwarfs)  Level Three: Niflheim (Hel) (land of death)  Muspell (home of the fiery creature)  Note: J. R. R. Tolkein took his Middle Earth ideas straight from Norse mythology. The names of dwarves who appear in books like *The Hobbit* (and of Gandalf the wizard) came from *Prose Edda*, a collection of Norse mythology. Many fantasy stories by authors such as L. Alexander, S. Cooper, M. Hunter, U. K. LeGuin, C. S. Lewis, and L. Yep echo stories and literary patterns found in myths and legends (Young, Bruchac, Livingston, & Kurkjian, 2004, p. 783).  The Norse story of creation begins with ice. This is a part of nature not included in other creation stories. Why would ice be a natural part of the Norse story?   * What elements of the Norse way of life come through in their stories? * What natural phenomenon does this story try to explain?   **Language Study: Symbols**   * A symbol is an object that stands for an idea or another object. A Maple Leaf flag stands for Canada or a nation, a red light stands for the command “stop”, a dollar sign, $, is derived from the number 8 or 8 Spanish “reales” (i.e., old Spanish currency). * Literary symbols are used because they have a commonly understood meaning – a river can stand for life, the ocean suggests eternity, while night suggests death. * In the Norse creation narratives, ice is used as a symbol of death. What stands for or symbolizes life?   **Other Old Norse or Viking Narratives**  “The Norse gods and goddesses were very like the Norsemen. They fought, married, and loved adventures. They felt human emotions such as jealousy and could behave in a most ungodlike way” (Evans & Millard, 1986).  **Stories of Norse Gods and Goddesses**  Lesson 10 – 120 minutes   * “This is the story of the Norse gods and goddesses, their many adventures in the lands of men, dwarfs, and giants; their magic weapons and enchantments; their battles with their enemies and finally their doom in the last battle of all – Ragnarok” (Harrison & Humphries, 1985). * Many of the Norse narratives tell of conflicts between gods and monsters. The gods gradually bring order to the chaos that the monsters and giants constantly try to create. * As students listen to and read these stories, encourage them to consider the motives or reasons for the characters’ actions. Why do the characters behave as they do? What do their actions reveal about human nature?   **Suggested Resources:**   * Odin: “Odin Goes to Mimir’s Well” retold by Padraic Colum, “Odin’s Three Quests” by Mary Pope Osborne, or “How Odin Lost His Eye” retold by C. F. Sellew * Frigga/Freya: “How Freya Gained Her Necklace” retold by Padraic Colum, “The Lady of the Vanir” retold by Barbara Picard, or “Frigga’s Necklace” retold by C. F. Sellew * Loki: “How Loki Outwitted a Giant” retold by Barbara Picard, “Loki the Betrayer” and “Loki Against the Aesir” retold by Padraic Colum, “The Magic Stallion” by Mary Pope Osborne, “Loki’s Children and the Binding of Fenrir” by Kevin Crossley-Holland, “Loki’s Children” by Mary Pope Osborne, “The Treasures of the Gods” by Kevin Crossley-Holland, “The Magic Gifts” and “The Dwarfs’ Context” by C. F. Sellew, or “The Apples of Iduna” by Dorothy Hosford * Thor: “Thor and Loki in the Giants’ City” and “Aegir’s Feast: How Thor Triumphed” Utgard” by Kevin Crossley-Holland, “Thor’s Voyage to the Land of the Giants” and “The Contest with the Giants” by C. F. Sellew, “Thor’s Visit to Utgard” by Roger Lancelyn Green, or “Thor and the Giant King” by Olivia E. Coolidge * Sif: “Sif’s Golden Hair” retold by Padraic Colum, “The Six Gifts” retold by Barbara Picard, or “Sif’s Golden Hair” by C. F. Sellew * Balder: “Balder’s Doom” retold by Padraic Column, “The Death of Balder” retold by Barbara Picard, “Balder’s Dreams” by Kevin Crossley-Holland and “The Death of Balder” by Kevin Crossley-Holland, “The Death of Balder” by Mary Pope Osborne, or “Baldur, the Beautiful” by Olivia E. Coolidge   **Writing a Character Analysis**   * As students listen, read, and view the Norse narratives, have them consider the characters they meet. * Have students choose one of the characters from the Norse sagas and make a list of this character’s personality traits. * Encourage students to think about the motives, or reasons, for the character’s actions, and divide their list into positive traits and negative traits. Students should include at least five traits in each part. Have students create a sentence stating their main idea about the character’s personality. * Then, using sentences to support the topic sentence, students should tell about each trait that supports their topic sentence.   **Alternate Writing Activity**   * Loki was originally a Frost Giant, but he found favour with Odin because of his sharp mind and tongue. For this reason he was allowed in Asgard. He could change his shape at will; sometimes he helped the other gods but more often he played tricks on them. Because of his cunning and magical tricks, Loki was a central figure in many of the Norse myths. * Have students consider the following prompt:  |  |  | | --- | --- | | **R**ole: | You are the trickster’s psychiatrist. | | **A**udience: | The jury needs a clear analysis of the trickster and a recommendation for future treatment. | | **F**ormat: | Character analysis and recommendation paragraph. | | **T**opic: | What is the trickster like? How does he deserve to be treated? | | **S**trong Verb: | Analyze the trickster’s character and recommend a plan for his future treatment. |   **Language Study: Where Do Words Come From?**   * The English language has been influenced by the Norse people. Some of the Norse language is still with us – the days   of the week (Twisday, Wodensday, Thorsday, and Freyasday) are named after their gods Twi, Odin, Thor, and Freya.   * Many moral sayings or proverbs of the Norse are still with us. For example, “The path to a good friend’s house is straight, though he is far away.” “The foolish man lies awake all night/Thinking of his many problems/When the morning comes he is worn out/And his trouble is just as it was.” “To one, tell your thoughts/But be wary of two;/All know what is known to three.” * What is the wisdom of these proverbs? Which one rings true? Why?   **The End of a World (The Day of Doom)**  Lesson 11 – 60 minutes  The Norse believed that Loki’s wickedness and Balder’s death heralded the coming of the end of the world or Ragnarok. According to predictions that are still to come, quarrels between gods and giants will become fiercer and more frequent. There will be constant war on Earth and men will slay their own fathers and brothers. Midgard will freeze, killing all humans except one pair.   * Have students read one of the following: “The End of All Things” retold by Barbara Picard, “The Twilight of the Gods” retold by Padraic Colum, “Ragnarok” retold by Kevin Crossley-Holland, “Twilight of the Gods” by Mary Pope Osborne, or “The Twilight of the Gods” by Olivia E. Coolidge * Do students think the predictions are accurate? Why or why not? * Have students write a persuasive paragraph to express their opinion and to support with reasons.   **Norse Hero Tales, Sagas, and Legends**  Lesson 12 – 180 minutes  Every age and culture has its heroes; often, they become immortalized in legends. Norse sagas are stories that deal with early Germanic heroes or kings. Like legends around the world, these Norse legendsare stories that are told to entertain and to instruct. They usually involve humans (although gods or monsters may also appear) and are told to show the importance of a human trait such as courtesy, bravery, or wisdom.  Legends are stories. When we hear, read, or view them, we need to consider (1) when and where the story takes place (setting); (2) the people or animals who take part in the story, particularly the brave, good person and the opposing person or people who are usually powerful and possibly evil (characters); (3) the series of events that take place in the story (plot); and (4) the narrator (the person telling the story).  **Beowulf**  Activity 1  **Suggested Resources:** *Beowulf* retold by Kevin Crossley-Holland and illustrated by Charles Keeping, Oxford University Press, 1982, “The Song of Beowulf” retold by Olvia F. Coolidge, or “Beowulf and the Fight with Grendel” by Rosemary Sutcliff  **Writing**   * Sometime in the eighth century, a poem was composed about a man whose name, Beowulf, means “the bear”. * *Beowulf* is the story of a young man who traveled from Sweden (Geat) to Denmark to fight two terrifying monsters – one who could rip a person apart and drink his blood, the other who lived like a sea wolf at the bottom of a dark, blood-stained lake. The first monster is named Grendel and he has been plaguing the king of Denmark’s hall. After killing Grendel, Beowulf returns to his homeland, becomes king, and after ruling for fifty years, is forced to fight a vicious dragon. * Have students consider: Who was Beowulf? What did he accomplish that made him a hero? How and why did he die? * Have students explain in a persuasive paragraph why they think Beowulf should be considered a hero.   **Viewing: Images of a Hero**   * Illustrators have tried to present their view of Beowulf, Grendel, and Grendel’s mother. * Have students view three different illustrations of each character (e.g., Charles Keeping’s illustrations in Kevin Crossley-Holland’s *Beowulf*). * Ask students to look at each illustration and discuss each with a partner. * How does each illustration attempt to bring the character to life? * What details are most striking? * What traits are emphasized (or exaggerated) in each illustration? * What visual elements were used to create each overall image of the character? * What images, symbols, and other visual effects play a role in shaping their interpretation or feelings toward the character? * How are these illustrations similar to or different from the picture that they had in their mind after reading about each character? * Which illustration is the most effective and why?   **Sigurd (or Siegfried)**  Activity 2  **Suggested Resources:** “Sigurd’s Youth”, “The Sword Gram and the Dragon Fafnir”, and “The Dragon’s Blood“ as retold by Padraic Colum, or “Sigurd of the Volsungs”, “The Slaying of Fafnir”, and “How Sigurd awoke Brynhild upon Hindfell” retold by Mauric Saxby and illustrated by Robert Ingpen   * Have students consider: Who was Sigurd? What were his strong points? What, if any, were his weaknesses? Do you think he got what he deserved? Why, or why not?   **Writing: Using Persuasive Techniques**    Direct Persuasion   * When we want to persuade someone to do something or think about someone in a particular way, we can use different techniques such as: * hero appeal (to convince our audience that this person is the only person who can do the job) * basic humanity appeal (to convince the audience that he is really a good person who everyone needs at this time) * courage appeal (to convince the audience to prove that they are not afraid to do something) * promise appeal (to promise the audience some kind of reward for doing something). * Use these four techniques to convince someone that Beowulf or Sigurd was a hero worthy of honour.   **Or**  Indirect Persuasion   * Have students consider how the Beowulf story would be different if Grendel’s mother wrote it. * Prompt: Imagine that you are Grendel’s mother. You have always loved your son, even though you know he has trouble catching enough of those nasty little human things to satisfy his hunger. You may wish, for example, to begin with a topic sentence like, “Poor little Grendel had such a bad day,” or, “My poor boy had no idea that a nasty human was …”   **Representing: Creating a Portrait of a Hero (or Monster)**  Activity 3   * Have students choose one character – Sigurd, Beowuf, Grendel, or Grendel’s mother – and then brainstorm what traits they would like to illustrate if they had the opportunity to produce the cover of a new text intended for grade 9 containing the stories of this hero (or monster). * Using a pencil medium (black and white or colour), have students sketch their illustration and then title it.   **Focus Question 5: Why is it important for each generation to hear and to retell these tales?**  **Just a Good Story (“Good Story That”)**  Like all people around the world, the Indigenous people of Canada and the Norse liked to share stories that captured everyday life, experiences, and events. These stories often took the form of memoirs and of family events that were told and retold at social gatherings.  Did you hear the one about …? Do you remember the time …?  “Old stories are like large snowballs rolling down a hill. They grow, gathering details with each telling. Sometimes they break apart into two or three stories; sometimes they hold together and become a cycle of related tales, or even an epic. Sometimes the added details were invented on the spot by a storyteller, in Ireland called a *shanachie*, and some were brought from other stories from other lands” (Milligan, 2003, author’s note in Young, Bruchac, Livingston, & Kurkjian, 2004, p. 782).  “The art of oral tradition encompasses such essential consideration as memorization, intonation, inflection, precision of statement, brevity, rhythm, pace, and dramatic effect … metaphor and figurative language. Storytelling is a creative and imaginative expression. Through stories we strive to realize our capacity for wonder, meaning, and delight. We tell stories in order to better understand and learn from our experiences whatever they may be. The possibilities, then, are those of understanding our human experience, of passing on this knowledge of teaching and of learning” (SIFC).  **Sharing a Good Story**  Lesson 13 – 60 minutes   * The original stories that were passed along by storytellers are still powerful when they are spoken rather than read silently. * Select a section of one of the narratives that you have listened to or read so far. * Choose a section that is several paragraphs long and prepare to read it aloud to a group or the class and then to record it. * You may choose a section that focuses on a character or on the setting. * Try to have your voice express the mood of the story. Decide which words and ideas need to be emphasized. * Read through the selection several times to become comfortable with it and then practise using an appropriate speed. Pronounce all the words correctly and clearly.   **What Have You Learned? Reviewing the Focus Questions**   1. Why do people tell stories and tales (folk tales, legends, fables, proverbs)? 2. How do these stories and tales help people understand their world? 3. What lessons do we learn about people through these stories and tales? 4. How are these stories and tales from around the world alike and different? 5. Why is it important for each generation to hear and to retell these tales?   Have students review and enhance comparison/contrast chart or Venn diagram.  **Concluding Activities**  Choose one or two activities from each category.  **Oral**   * Make a dramatic tape recording of one of the episodes from a narrative that you have studied. * Using any of the traditional narratives, write or improvise a comedy scene that brings out the less desirable traits of humans. * Some modern stories have monsters in them. Tell a story you know that has such creatures in it. * Select a scene from one of the narratives and create a dramatic skit. * Create a hero or heroine and invent a quest for him or her. Tell his or her story. * Organize a storytelling festival.   **Written**   * Make a comparison of the elements in two of the narratives. What common elements exist in both? * Choose several stories from one culture. Compare the stories. How are the stories connected? How are they different? * Write a letter to … (a hero from one of the narratives). * “Many traditional narratives are a source of information about etiquette, customs, and traditions.” Find examples of each in the story. * “By understanding the myths, we will understand ourselves better.” Do you agree with this statement by Isaac Asimov? Why or why not? * Create a short poem based on an event in one of the narratives. * Write a gossip column in which you cover some of the amusing and interesting activities of a community in one of the narratives. or, if you prefer, try writing a column of advice to the character. * Assume the personality of an important figure from one of the narratives and write a letter to another important figure from another of the narratives. * Assume the identity of one of the important figures and write some entries for a journal or a diary, giving the day-by-day experiences you might encounter. Use your imagination and attempt to reflect the personality of the character. * Invent a story of your own to explain thunder, lightning, rain or snow, or the reason for clouds. * Many narratives have creatures such as giants, dwarfs, and monsters. Rewrite a narrative from the perspective of one of these creatures. * Pretend you once lived in the 1700s but you have come back to life in the year 2011. What story might you invent to explain the compact disc, supersonic jet, or automated bank teller if no one told you what they were or how they work? (from *Tell Me a Tale*) * Make a story bag (a bag that will contain objects that stand for the tales you know and can tell … (from *Tell Me a Tale*). * Write a heroic poem. * Revise the plot of one of the narratives so that it results in a very different ending. * Write a horoscope for one of the characters in one of the narratives.   **Multimedia**   * Design and write a class newspaper based on the news events surrounding an event of great importance in one of the traditional narratives (e.g., Ragnarok). Write complete ads, comics, and sports from a Norse point of view, the day after the cataclysm has taken place. * Create and illustrate a children’s book for one of the narratives. * Make a story map for one of the narratives. * Illustrate one of the narratives that you found most interesting. * Create a classroom video of one of the narratives. | Note students’ willingness to participate, share knowledge and insights, and reflect. Throughout this unit, students are asked to reflect, take a stand, and support their stand with reasons and evidence.  Students need to return to the focus questions throughout the unit. All the developmental and summative activities should be considered against the focus questions.  Consider how attentively, carefully, and reflectively students listen. Do they prepare to listen? Listen with a purpose in mind? Make notes as they listen? Analyze, synthesize, and summarize what they have heard?  Ask students to identify one or more important purposes for storytelling.  Ask students to consider what they would do to improve their abilities to listen, observe, remember, and share what they have heard. How can students ensure that they do this accurately and in a manner that honours the storyteller?  Note how students use voice, facial expressions, and gesture to convey the storyline and mood and to bring the characters to life.  Have students self-assess their inclusion of essential elements of a story (time, place, characters, sequence of events, and message) and retelling of the story. Each person could make a tape recording of their retelling for comparisons.  What are the similarities and differences in the events (plot), setting (when and where), and theme (message) of two or more of these stories?  Were students able to articulate “why” this sentence was important and effective?  Were students able to prepare and create an appropriate graphic organizer? How comfortable are they with preparing graphic organizers to illustrate their thinking?  Were students able to visualize? Did they include the appropriate details and were students able to articulate their reasons for suitability of details? How much scaffolding do students require?  Consider how clearly and concisely students can state orally and in writing the main ideas.  Can students make notes and review and revise their notes to ensure accuracy, retention, and clarity?  What do student think are the key ideas presented?  Evaluate students’ graphic organizers for accuracy and completeness.  Review note-making for response to questions and for completeness.  Prepare and use a reading comprehension check.  Create and share writing rubric and recording expectations. Consider introduction, middle, and ending, sequence of events, and use of transition words as well as conventions and mechanics.  Focus on a clearly spoken, audible, expressive oral presentation that is given at a natural rate.  Notemaking check.  Chart check.  Create and share rubric with students. Consider form, word choice, and overall impression.  Prepare a CSSD check.  Poetry comprehension check.  Evaluate insightfulness and comprehension in dialogue journal.  Have students identify and sort the qualities that make heroes and monsters what they are.  Rubric for explanatory paragraph.  Dialogue journal check.  Rubric for representing.  Symbols check.  Comprehension and response checks.  Create and share rubric for character analysis.  Create and share rubric for character analysis and recommendation paragraph.  Word origin check.  Proverb check.  Prepare and share rubric for persuasive paragraph one.  As a class, develop and share persuasive paragraph rubric.  Check ability to support conclusions using specific evidence from illustrations.  Create and share the rubric for the persuasive paragraph.  Jointly, create and share the rubric for the book jacket (cover).  Create and share storytelling rubric.  Check understanding of the focus questions.  In advance, establish and share expectations and rubrics that will be used to mark oral, written, and multimedia projects. |

Appendix A

Appendix A

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| **Reading Log for Unit** | | | | | | |
| **Title** | **Author** | **Date** | | **Number of Pages** | **Comments** | **Rating** |
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